

# Who's Who When it Comes to Flu



Flu affects everyone, making a variety of community and health leaders appropriate experts for your stories about flu prevention and treatment. Depending on the spokesperson, a traditional story about flu could take on a new, more relevant meaning for your community. Below are suggestions for types of people able to communicate about flu, how they may affect your story and information on reaching out to these spokespeople.

**Regional and State Public Health Officials**—Public health officials can provide a clinical definition of flu, vetted strategies for prevention and a global perspective on illness. Their role as community leaders in health allows them to be credible sources for any flu-related questions and concerns ranging from the likelihood of pandemic flu to strategies for increasing access to vaccines.

**City and County Public Health Officials**—Local public health officials are used to talking about illness and preventive health from a community perspective. They are well-versed in the concerns of area citizens as well as local health and flu resources.

**Faith Leaders**—Local faith leaders are also community leaders and serve as great resources in learning more about where people are going for health information, including how many of their congregants are interested in taking precautions against flu.

**Registered Nurses**—Nurses are the most likely people to administer flu vaccinations at clinics and community health activities. They are valuable resources in learning trends around vaccination — what types of people are more likely to get vaccinated? Are there new groups coming in for vaccinations? Why do some people choose not to get immunized?

**Doctors and Health Care Providers**—Local doctors, health care providers and specialists are valued community experts in personal health. They can provide a local voice on any story about flu including how vaccines work and why vaccinations are important in preventing all types of flu.

**School Nurses**—School nurses are taking care of our kids all day long. They are the best resource to find out what schools in your community are doing to prevent the spread of flu this season.

**Nutritionists**—Who knew? A healthy diet can prevent flu! Look to local nutritionists and dieticians to learn about the qualities of certain types of foods that can boost the immune system and help to prevent flu and other illnesses.

**Pharmacists**—Pharmacists are the second line of defense for people battling flu. After visiting the doctor, many people will go to their local pharmacy to purchase over-the-counter cold and flu remedies to help reduce symptoms. Pharmacists can help tell the trend story — how many people are buying over-the-counter remedies?

**Business Owners**—Find out what local businesses are doing during cold and flu season when employees call in sick. Is there a back-up plan for a short staff? Are they providing resources for employees to prevent spreading flu? Learn first hand how flu affects businesses in your community.